

Shanklin's Letter.

The following letter from the pen of that veteran Democrat and editor, Hon. John Gilbert Shanklin of Indiana, will be refreshing to those who believe in honesty and courage in politics. It was addressed to the Indianapolis Sentinel:

To the Editor—Sir: The discussion which has been called out by the proposition that bimetalism is a dead and buried issue, at least for the present, proves how ineffectual are pronouncements not authorized by a party convention. Until the delegates of the people, duly chosen in conformity with established usage, shall again meet to formulate a platform the one last adopted must stand as the law of the party. We may have our opinions as to its utility and have a perfect right to advance them as individuals. But no man has a right to assume that his ipse dixit disposes of a measure which was seriously discussed at the last convention and adopted, even by a majority of one, as an official expression of those having the authority to construct a platform. There is a fundamental law underlying all democracy; it is that the widest liberty shall be allowed, even invited, in the expression of opinion, but that the majority shall rule in all cases, and that the principles and policies declared by the majority at one convention shall stand as an inexorable law of the party until revoked by a succeeding convention.

Those who have been in the habit of attending conventions of any kind, even national conventions, know how difficult, sometimes impossible, it is for a disorganized majority to cope successfully with an organized minority. The one is overconfident, or, perhaps, lacks the sinews of war and does not prepare for battle; the other, conscious of its weakness, makes careful preparation and often carries the day in defiance of numbers. Generally, however, the majority is so overwhelming that the intrigue and schemes of the minority are powerless against it. This was the case at Chicago in 1896, which convention culminated in the nomination of William Jennings Bryan on the glorious platform that four years later was reaffirmed at Kansas City. That platform stands today as the existing law of the party according to all past usage. A democrat may oppose individually some of its features; but no living man is authorized to speak of any of its declarations as a dead and buried issue. The next convention of the party is the autocrat that can do that—an autocrat because composed of the representatives of the people and the people are the only sovereign power recognized by our constitution.

It may be urged that in cases where the minority have outmaneuvered the majority the people repudiate the result when it comes to the polls. In fact, it is impossible at this moment to recall any variation of this rule. On the other hand, it may be asked when the majority has its way, does it always win at the polls? There are obvious reasons why a majority candidate or policy does not invariably succeed. The majority of the people as between political parties may not be in sympathy with the candidate or platform. There may be a lack of leadership, of organization, of information, etc. After the conduct of the bolters in 1896 it seems unnecessary to point out why Bryan was not elected. These bolters, who voted for Palmer and Buckner or for McKinley outright—those traitors, some of whom calmly admit their overt act, while others lack the courage to confess their red-handed guilt—those renegades now have the effrontery to essay the reorganization of the glorious democracy! Who will follow them through a slaughter-house to an open grave which Mr. Watterson prepared for Cleveland in 1892, but which has never been filled, for the people believed in Cleveland then? But let those who are now reading us lessons in the fundamentals of democracy and who directly or indirectly by the various

means which the plutocracy was careful to provide, contributed to McKinley's election, nominate Cleveland in 1904! The grave is still open.

As to the Ohio democracy it is unnecessary to speak. It has made its own bed and the democracy of Indiana is not compelled to lie in it. Is the Ohio democracy opposed to trusts as now organized? If so, why did it not nominate Mr. Monnett? Is it opposed to government by injunction and in favor of an income tax? Then why did it not say so? Has it no opinions at all on the money question? It may find that the people are not asleep on any of these subjects.

Referring to free silver, which has been pronounced "a dead and buried issue," the people seem to have said thrice that they preferred a gold standard. So be it! The increased supply of gold has undoubtedly in some degree accomplished what the advocates of free silver coinage asked. The quantitative theory has been vindicated at least to a certain extent. There are millions of men, however, who still believe in bimetalism. "Learned financiers" in their self-sufficiency contend that the volume of money is now adequate to all demands. By all demands they mean their demands and in the latter they are undoubtedly correct. The opposition to free silver is but one link in the chain of plutocracy along with the tariff, national bank notes, national bonds, free franchises for corporations, the monopoly of mines and oil which are gifts of nature and should therefore be for all the people, and of trusts. If conducted for the benefit of the people trusts would be a boon. As conducted for the benefit of combinations of individuals, already too rich, they are a blasphemy.

Allow me to say, Mr. Morss, that we all understand what the fundamental principles of democracy are. But if a principle is right does it vary with varying conditions, and is it not to be applied when a manifest wrong is being practiced to the advantage of a few people anyway? Are the fundamental principles of "equal rights," "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" possible in an atmosphere that is polluted by a plutocracy which exists in scorn of equality and in hatred of liberty?

Watterson on Bryan.

The brilliant rhetoric which Henry Watterson employs when inspired makes his writing fascinating. We care little about the sentiment but much about the style. The Louisville editor furnishes entertainment, but he is unsafe to follow as political guide or prophet.

Just now Mr. Watterson is engaged in reading Mr. Bryan out of the democratic party. He couples with this task a prophecy of defeat should he not succeed. Mr. Watterson is impartial in his denunciation. In 1892 he read out Mr. Cleveland. He plead for the nomination of another candidate and when Mr. Cleveland was nominated he insisted, in his picturesque phraseology, that the democratic party would "march through a slaughter house to an open grave." Four months later Mr. Cleveland was elected president. This is but one of many similar incidents which demonstrate the peculiar ability of Mr. Watterson as a prophet.—Columbia (Mo.) Herald.

The Press as an Educator.

Long ago it was said that the world is governed by three boxes—the cartridge-box, the ballot-box and the hand-box—force, votes, women. But now a fourth must be added—the mail-box, loaded by the countless products of the printing press.

Today the newspaper competes with seminaries, colleges and universities as an educator; with courts as a detector, exposé and punisher of crime; with fashion as a regulator of manners, and with the church as a modifier of morals. Through its advertisements and reports of transactions and markets, from the price of garden truck to the plans and achievements of the cosmopolitan financiers of the exchanges and bourses, it

is the chief reliance of commerce. It can also nullify the acts of legislatures and the decisions of courts by creating a sentiment inimical to their enforcement, and it even assumes to elect presidents, to dethrone kings, to declare war and to criticize and direct the movements of armies and navies.

Speaking generally, what the press does for the public—including the church—in the dissemination of information, in unifying public sentiment and arousing it and bringing it to bear to remedy wrongs, expose abuses and to drag into light insidious vices which perish when known abroad; in concentrating public attention on unpunished crime, and revealing the fitness or unfitness of candidates for office, cannot be overestimated.—Dr. J. M. Buckley before the Epworth League.

Intelligence in Animals.

In a circus in Paris a lion was given some meat shut up in a box with a lid to it, and the spectators watched to see whether the lion would open the lid or crack the box. He did the former, much to the gratification of the company.

Female deer, when brought up by hand, often show quite astonishing intelligence, as do the males until they become vicious, which they always do. The stag which used to climb the barrack stairs, go out on to the outside gallery and knock at the doors of the married quarters, which were the only place where milk, of which he was particularly fond, was delivered in the morning, is only one instance in many of their cleverness.

In the London "Zoo" a large African elephant restores to his would-be entertainers all the biscuits, whole or broken, which strike the bars and fall alike out of his reach and theirs in the space between the barrier and his cage. He points his trunk straight at the biscuits and blows them hard along the floor to the feet of the persons who have thrown them. He clearly knows what he is doing, because if the biscuit does not travel well he gives it a harder blow.

Many animals, either pursuing or pursued, exhibit a knowledge of facts very little known to the majority of mankind, such as of the places where scent lies or is obliterated and of the effects of wind in carrying evidence of their presence to the pursuer. The hunted roe or hare will make circles, double on its own tracks and take to water or fling itself for a considerable distance through the air as cleverly as if it had read up all the theory of scent in a book. Nor are the pursuers less ingenious. They have learned the art of "making a cast." This is the dodge by which a huntsman alike saves time and picks up a lost scent.—London Spectator.

Reverence Due Respectability.

For my part, while my regard for the hypocrisy of society, which observes the letter of respectability and disregards the soul of it, is slight indeed, I still decline to admit that there is no such thing as true respectability, or that it does not merit reverence. We are most of us sinners, no doubt; perhaps all of us are. Nevertheless there does exist the principle of purity, chastity and fidelity. There is such a thing, or such a possibility, as the ideal marriage; there is such a law as the foregoing of one's own good for the sake of others. Actual society is false and corrupt, but it is compelled by the instinct of self-preservation to maintain an appearance of being pure and true. It practises evil, but it preaches good; because if it preached what it practises human society would dissolve. If there were not always growing up amidst us a fresh generation of ignorant and innocent persons, capable of good, our virtuous pretenses would be vain, since no one could be either deceived or benefitted by them. Children are the essential prerequisite of any form of human community or civilization; whether or not we recognize the truth, all we do that is not exactly evil is done for them.—Julian Hawthorne in Philadelphia North American.